

News Release

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

Address: Earth Science Info. Center
507 National Center
Reston, VA 20192

Email: crobrien@usgs.gov

Release	Contact:	Phone:	Fax:
July 12, 1999	Cheryl O'Brien	703-648-5929	703-648-5548

Science Camp Returns to the USGS

Mineral Mania kicks off the fourth year of Science Camp at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). In partnership with the Reston Association, the USGS has developed a highly successful Science Camp where children can interact with USGS scientists, participate in science lab experiments and computer lab activities, and enjoy local field trips. Four 2-week sessions are offered for children ages 8-12.

During the first 2-week Mineral Mania session, USGS geologist Sandy Clark entertained and educated the campers, using animated characters to build a better understanding of common minerals. A slide presentation, a play, and a song by the "Southern Appalachia Rock Band" kept the children engrossed as they learned about rocks and their properties.

Mineral Mania also included gold panning, demonstrated by geologist, Andrew Grosz. The campers considered this a highlight of the week as they actually "struck gold."

Norrie Robbins, a USGS geologist with the Energy Team, helped the science campers understand the difference between a science teacher and a scientist. She also introduced them to the minerals iron, manganese, and copper which were created by bacteria in a stream environment.

Other educational activities during this 2-week session included looking at rock crystals forming in a science lab, observing a local goldsmith creating jewelry from raw gold, and looking at Internet Web sites that focus on minerals, gems, and volcanoes. The children did arts and crafts, learned to play lacrosse, and created their own newspaper. Swimming and boating rounded out the session, along with a cookout and an outdoor festival.

Future USGS Science Camp 1999 sessions include EcoCamp, Hydrofantastic, and Diagnosis Fun. For more information on the Reston Association Science Camps, please contact the Reston Association Registrar's office at 435-6551.

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As the nation's largest water, earth and biological science and civilian mapping agency, the USGS works in cooperation with more than 2,000 organizations across the country to provide reliable, impartial scientific information to resource managers, planners, and other customers. This information is gathered in every state by USGS scientists to minimize the loss of life and property from natural disasters, contribute to sound economic and physical development of the nation's natural resources, and enhance the quality of life by monitoring water, biological, energy, and mineral resources.

USGS

(Note to Reporters: If interested in coming out to the U.S. Geological Survey at 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive in Reston for photo opportunities or for photographs of Mineral Mania, please contact Beth Stettner at 703-648-5928.)